

More of L. Akin's Views.

To The Adair County News:

Some time last summer I wrote an article which if I mistake not appeared in both of our county papers, and perhaps was approved by some, while it may have been disapproved by many of its readers. Nevertheless, it was a chance for me to give vent to my ideas. Now, as I have another collection that I must give to, I give room for more ideas that will probably be of greater benefit to me whether the public ever sees them in print or not. I will endeavor to write again.

The article I wrote last summer was in regard to the rural schools of Adair county and the inability of some of us to comply with the new school law. But what I want to say now is that our rural schools are not what they should be and who is to blame?

We often hear folks say that our Legislatures are to blame and perhaps they should share a part of the blame, but when we study the causes of the conditions that surround our country schools, we find that each party is concerned from the child in the school room to the State Superintendent is more or less to blame for the existing conditions of our rural schools. I would like to take up a few of the parties concerned and show why I think they may be blamed for these conditions.

The small child in the school room is not to blame in the least, but larger children can be a great pull back to a school in many ways. By their own idleness and indifference. They not only slow up their own progress in school, but they aggravate and hinder the progress of others, and by the insanitary condition of their person, their clothes, their books and their habits, they may make things unpleasant for themselves and others. They can also be a draw back to the school by constantly nagging and tormenting some poor child, who has never had good opportunities and perhaps has never had enough to eat and wear. A child that will practice such pastime should get a severe punishment and they usually get it if the teachers are what they ought to be. In many cases the parents and the teachers are to blame for these faults in children, in addition to their own faults.

The patrons of our rural schools can be a great hindrance by not showing their children that they are interested in them getting an education and by not giving them the proper help and training at home, and by not using the hickory if it is needed and by not cooperating with the teacher and failing to provide the necessary books, pencils, etc. Most of the patrons are guilty of some, if not all of these faults, and there are others we might mention.

We have some good, efficient teachers in Adair county, who are doing their very best and they make good wherever they teach, and we should appreciate them. But some of our teachers deserve to and must share a part of the blame for the conditions of our rural schools. You know that some folks have an idea that if one has a certificate issued to them by the county Su-

perintendent, giving them the right to teach school, they are it. But I want to say dear readers that all who have such certificates are not school teachers by any means. There are many ways by which the teachers can and do raise the standard of our schools and there are many other ways by which they can lower the standard, a few of which I would like to point out as I see them. It seems to be a great fashion among our teachers of late to put in their application for a school and if they are successful in getting one, they go in the early part of the summer, sign a contract with the Board of Education to teach a six months term of school. They will begin as soon as possible and teach until the schools open in the South. Then they get word that money is growing in the hills with the peanuts down there, and they put out to Georgia, leaving the schools here to go to the bats and owls far as much as they are concerned. After we have paid our school tax, bought \$12 or \$15 worth of books and went in debt for an extra outfit of clothes for our children, and by the time we can get our school started again, the children have forgotten there were ever such a thing as schools, books or new overalls. Now, this is one fault that might partly be placed upon our Legislature, because they have not provided a law, giving the Superintendent the right to hold two months of the pay for such teachers, to be paid to the teacher, who will take up such schools in ten days, and teach them to a finish. Such teachers are tenfold more to blame than the Legislature from the simple fact, they violate their contract, lower their own honor and lose the respect of their patrons, and have done great damage to the interest of our schools. There are many other faults that teachers may have, and many other ways, by which they pull down the standard of education, but as I am taking too much space, I will leave them with you.

The next fellow who gets himself in a position to carry a part of this shameful blame is the honorable trustee of a common school district. If he makes a good deal somebody else gets the honor, and if he makes a bad one he gets all the blame, and I want to say in his behalf, when he has done what he thinks is his dead level best, then some times, after it is too late he finds he has made a miserable failure. The trustees of our schools have been very useful characters, and they have not been without sin. Suppose a man would start out seeking this honorable position, pledging himself to his neighbors, to get the best teacher going, and to see to it that they teach a good school and that he will consult with the patrons as to who to employ and so on. They heed his earnest pleadings, and elect him, as their trustee. Then he has several good teachers to see him, applying for the school and he begins to complain and whimper and say his taxes are to pay, and his children haven't sufficient clothing to go to school, and that it's a great deal of trouble and worry to be a school trustee. But all at once by some mysterious operation he seems to get reconciled and gives the school to Miss A.,

Mr. B., and Miss A. or Mr. B. enters the school room and takes up the school, but don't take much interest, but kills time and draws the rest of the pay. The patrons find the school has been a failure and that they have been betrayed. Is the Legislature of Kentucky to blame for that or is the county Superintendent to blame? Does cases of this kind help the cause of education?

We have had another class of trustees who have gone around to see their neighbors putting up the same great speal to get the confidence of the patrons, by making all kinds of fair promises, and after they are elected they happen to remember they have a son or daughter, a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, that might go to school through the winter, be examined in the spring, and teach the school for him, which has been done many times, to the entire satisfaction of the district, inasmuch that the district would ask for the same teacher next year. In cases of this kind it is all right, but in other cases teachers have been forced upon the patrons of school districts, when the trustee and his immediate family were the only satisfied party and that only for the salary the teacher drew, that trustee has lost confidence of his neighbors, sacrificed the interest of many poor and innocent little children, to satisfy his own selfish ideas, and has lowered the standard of education. I think the last session of our legislature intended to provide a remedy for these troubles of monopolizing the interest of the entire district into one family. But if our County Board of Education should undertake to practice such monopoly (which I trust they will not), then it would be a County Monopoly, instead of a school district.

All of our County Superintendents have not been without fault either, and the only reason I can give for them not having more faults, or as many as other folks, is because there is not as many Superintendents there are of other folks.

After all and the last analysis we find that we are all more or less to blame and we find we are a set of peculiar folks, each a little different from the other. You know we have some folks among us that haven't a bit of practical sense, nor a bit of book education, and the State has institutions to care for and treat such persons. There are others who have a little practical sense, and no book education. This is one who can largely take care of himself. Some have a small amount of each and is a little more able to take care of himself. Others have a vast amount of practical and book sense, well balanced, and they are the ones who are able to cope with the duties of life. There are other beings in this world, who have an abundance of book education without a bit of real sense. This fellow is due a lot of sympathy, that he never gets. He starts out upon what he thinks to be a straight line of life, but some observers soon notice that he is leaning to the heavy side and they soon find him going round and round, in a very small circle. The State has no institution to care for such a character, but the Legislative should provide some way of taking care of them and especially to keep them out

of the school rooms, because the more books he memorizes the worse he becomes.

Now, I am not writing this article as a matter of spite or prejudice, and I hope no one will notice anything for them to be offended. I have only written what I believe to be fair and honest facts and I hope every body will join in and help to make our schools better.

Yours for better schools, and a higher standard of education.

L. Akin.



BEGINNING THE DAY

"IF A MAN begins the day in a good humor," observed the professor, "everything will prosper with him." "You talk as though beginning the day in a good humor was as easy as falling off a log," said the low-browed man. "I suppose

you have been reading one of those fool sunshine books, and you think a man can be in a good humor just by saying he is going to be. But a man can't control his humors any more than he can control dreams.

"Some days I feel like the original Sunny Samuel, and I just naturally go around shedding light into the dark places, and making everybody glad. At such times the world seems an unqualified success, and the fact that I was born into it does not cause me any remorse. If some prominent citizen backed me up against a fence and asked me what made me feel so gay, I couldn't give him any helpful information. I don't know, myself, what causes the chipper feeling. I suppose it must be because my works are in good condition, doing their digestive stunts at the old stand.

"After a few days the glad feeling passes away, and instead of being a Sunny Samuel I become a Mourful Moses. I have all kinds of presentiments of evil. I have a firm conviction that the bottom is about to drop out of everything, and that I'll be mixed up with the wreckage. I take a pessimistic view of everything, and go grouching around until even the cows are sick of seeing me, and they give me a lift with their hind feet as a gentle hint that I should come out of my trance.

"If a leading business man asked me to explain my melancholy I couldn't do it. The world seems to be moving along as though nothing had happened, the same old sun is shining on the day shift, and the scented zephyrs are blowing through my whiskers as of old.

"Often a man begins the day wrong, through some accident or unpleasant experience. Then he knows why he has a grouch, but that doesn't help him to get rid of it. This morning I was lying in bed dreaming that I was the only original white hope, and that I was making a heroic effort to bring the laurels back to the Caucasian race. I was just administering an uppercut that seemed destined to bring home the bacon, when I fell out of bed and practically ruined my head against the floor.

"I came downstairs in a beastly humor, and after breakfast I went over and picked a quarrel with old Doo-little, so that he had to shin up a tree to escape violence, and all because I was feeling ornery. It wouldn't have been safe for any man to tell me that in order to begin the day right all a man has to do is to begin it right.

"I have gone out from the house to milk the cows in the morning, many a time, feeling as blithesome and glad as a dickybird, and quite satisfied that the day was going to be one round of pleasure. Then a cow would give me a poke in the ribs with one of her celluloid horns, or push her big splay foot into a brimming bucket of milk, and the joyous stuff was all off, and I'd be so sore all day that Aunt Julia would hand me my meals with a pitchfork.

"The other morning I got up feeling so mean that I was ashamed to look in the mirror. I went downtown after breakfast, in the mood to rob a blind organ grinder of his few plugged nickels. Then I went to the post office and got a registered letter. A man who had owed me \$2 for five years had an ingrowing conscience at last, and sent the money to me. When I left the post office everybody commented on my winning smile and said I was the little sunbeam of the town."

The way things are now going in the two countries how long will it be before Mexico sends missionaries to the United States?

The Louisville

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Movies showing crime have been barred in Chicago. Now if vamping is also barred movie actors will all have to learn new roles.

The present cost of paper should make you careful of the new leaf you turned over on January the first.

Adair County News \$1.50

Three-fourths of the newspapers in Spain are contemplating going out of business because of the increase to them in the price of print paper, and the government is being called upon to subsidize the Spanish press, something it should not do. We imagine the trouble must come about thru tariff regulations, for most of the other countries of Europe are getting cheaper paper this year. Germany is beginning to manu-